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ABSTRACT

While the capacity to recognize and appreciate beauty may be inborn in all of us, participation in the arts as an audience or artist usually involves a learning process. What is the relationship between childhood and early adult experiences with the arts and later participation? In 1982, with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Census Bureau conducted a "Survey of Public Participation in the Arts" (SPPA) to gather preliminary information. The SPPA data permits analysis of three basic subjects: the patterns of socialization in the arts, the relationship of those patterns to adult participation in arts-related activities, and the relationship of socialization patterns to increased participation. The SPPA asked 11 questions about arts-related experiences occurring prior to age 24, covering the areas of arts lessons, appreciation classes, and attendance at arts-related events. About 70 percent of all respondents had some kind of socialization experience. Patterns of adult participation are measured through audience participation, media-related participation, and direct participation. The data reveal a general downward trend with increasing age with some exceptions in intermediate age groups. The SPPA data draw these conclusions: (1) early socialization in the arts is reflected in higher rates of adult participation; (2) socialization between the ages of 18 and 24 is an especially important predictor; (3) audience participation predictors do not work as well as artist or performer predictors; and (4) lessons and appreciation classes are more closely related to high levels of adult participation than audience-socialization activities. Twelve tables and five figures showing SPPA data are included. (PPB)

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SOCIALIZATION AND PARTICIPATION IN THE ARTS

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Richard J. Orend

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

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CHAPTER ONE

Why Do People Participate in the Arts?

ABOUT A CENTURY AGO Sir John Lubbock, Lord Avebury, declared that "art is unquestionably one of the purest and highest elements in human happiness. It trains the mind through the eye, and the eye through the mind. As the sun colors flowers, so does art color life."[1]

Do 20th-century Americans share this romantic view of art? Why do people participate in arts-related activities? For those of us already involved, one answer seems obvious: With Sir John, we believe that the arts—music, painting, sculpture, drama, and dance—add excitement and joy to our lives. Most of us, especially arts educators and administrators, would like to share those experiences with as many of our fellow-citizens as possible. There is a second answer, however, perhaps even more important: Modern society requires competence in acquiring information both visually and aurally. One need only think of the multitudes of diagrams we confront when we attempt to assemble holiday toys for our children, or recall the quantities of information we acquire by word of mouth, to know that without the kinds of literacy provided by training in the arts we cannot function properly.

Others do not share our perspective. For many people, the arts play little or no conscious role in life; sometimes they are seen as minor diversions in a crowded schedule of work and leisure activities. Why do these differences in attitude and behavior exist? And, given the belief that the arts can provide all that Sir John suggests and more, what can be done to increase the level of awareness and involvement among all members of our society?

[1] Sir John Lubbock, Lord Avebury, *The Pleasures of Life*. 2 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1889), Vol. 2, p. 80.

We cannot begin to answer these questions unless we first have a basic understanding of current patterns of participation in the arts. Why do we choose a certain level of participation in one or more of the arts? Is there demand for increased opportunities to take part in arts-related activities, and if so, what are the barriers to such participation?

While the capacity to recognize and appreciate beauty may be inborn in all of us, participation in the arts as audience or artists usually involves a learning process. What is the relationship between childhood and early adult experiences with the arts and later participation?

In 1982, with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Census Bureau conducted a "Survey of Public Participation in the Arts" (SPPA) to gather information on which preliminary answers to all of these questions can be based. The November and December interviews produced 2,678 valid responses to the *complete* SPPA questionnaire. In the present study, data from these two months of the survey have been used to examine whether early exposure to the arts is related to participation later in life.[2]

But what do we mean by "exposure," and is it an adequate term to describe the process by which people come to love and enjoy the arts? Those who study the workings of society think not; they prefer to use the word "socialization" to describe the relationship between early arts-related experiences and later participation in the arts. Socialization has been defined as the process by which individuals—usually children and teenagers—acquire various orientations, attitudes, and patterns of behavior that will persist when they become adults.[1]

The SPPA data collected from a national sample permits analysis of three basic subjects: the patterns of socialization in the arts, the relationship of those patterns to adult participation in arts-related activities, and the relationship of socialization patterns to demand for increased participation. But before trying to under-

[2] For information about obtaining the full results of the original study, please refer to the Appendix.

[1] David Easton and Jack Dennis, *Children and the Political System* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1969), p. 7.

stand how early experiences relate to later behavior, it is necessary to define and describe the behavior being analyzed.

What exactly do we mean by "arts-related activities?"For practical reasons, we defined participation as attendance at live performances (jazz, classical music, ballet, operas, musicals, and plays), visits to art museums and galleries, watching or listening to these arts-related programs on television, radio, or records, and participating directly in similar activities as performers or artists. The broad definition was used because Americans generally recognize these terms, and such recognition allowed us to communicate easily with our respondents in the context of a survey interview. It also allowed us to make a systematic examination of the relationship between adult participation and those earlier experiences in the arts which we have called "socialization."

Analysis of the data gleaned from the SPPA allowed us to test two hypotheses:

- ❖ There is a relationship between earlier arts-related experiences and later participation, either as consumer or producer, in the arts.
- ❖ Those individuals with a greater number of youthful experiences are likely to have higher rates of participation in arts-related activities as adults.

These hypotheses are said to express "relationships" because the SPPA data cannot establish the fact that early experience with arts-related activities *causes* higher levels of participation later in life. We can, however, identify those experiences and, to some extent, measure their relative intensity. We can also analyze the existence and level of participation across activities as diverse as attending the opera and creating a painting. When we compare information about childhood activities with the information collected about adult activities, we can answer some questions about the links between socialization and adult participation in arts-related activities. The pattern which emerges can suggest policies and strategies likely to increase public participation in the arts.

But what about those individuals whose behavior differs from the prevailing pattern? We all know people who had little or no exposure to the arts as children or young adults, and who never-

theless participate in arts-related activities. We also know people with the opposite characteristics: high levels of early socialization who no longer have anything to do with the arts. Again, using the SPPA data, we can learn something about them which may be useful in our efforts to increase participation.

Finally, data gleaned from the SPPA can tell us something about how those earlier socialization experiences are related to current demand for broader opportunities to participate in the arts, and about the obstacles encountered. This analysis extends the study of socialization to include the possibility for changing the behavior of those who express a desire to color their lives with art.

CHAPTER TWO

Socialization in the Arts

THOSE OF US WHO ARE COMMITTED to the arts find it difficult to understand how anyone who has seen a great painting, experienced the excitement of drama or dance, or listened to a splendid symphony could resist enchantment. Art engages our emotions as well as our senses, and we assume that others must be similarly moved. We also assume—perhaps too readily—that anyone who has been exposed to art must surely want to participate in the arts ever thereafter.

As Sir John Lubbock so aptly observed, art is one of the great pleasures of life, as well as a practical necessity. Others have made more extravagant claims. Charles Fairbanks, for example, believed that "Art is the surest and safest civilizer. . . . Open your galleries of art to the people, and you confer on them a greater benefit than mere book education; you give them a refinement to which they would otherwise be strangers."[1] Like those of us who are committed to the arts, Fairbanks was convinced that mere exposure to art would have lifelong effects. In other words, he used a certain type of "socialization model" to explain at least one aspect of human behavior.

The socialization model as we have defined it here suggests that our current behavior is, in part, a function of youthful learning experiences. In particular, arts-related experiences are said to create an understanding of and appreciation for the arts that will lead us to participate more as adults. But what precisely are those experiences that "socialize" us? Are some more effective socializers than others? Does it make a difference *when* during our

[1]Charles B. Fairbanks, *My Unknown Chum* (New York: The Devin-Adair Co., 1915), p. 139.

youth those experiences take place? And how about the quality and intensity of experience?

The first step in the analysis of socialization is to use the data available in the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA) to find out how people are socialized, and to what extent. The SPPA asked 11 questions about arts-related experiences occurring prior to age 24. The questions covered three basic kinds of experiences:

- Lessons, including those in music, visual arts, acting, ballet, creative writing, and crafts;
- Appreciation classes in both music and art; and
- Attendance at arts-related events, including plays, classical concerts or dance performances, exhibitions in art galleries or museums, and hearing classical music or opera played in the home.

The three questions on the SPPA about attendance asked only how often such arts-related experiences had taken place during the respondent's entire youth. The eight questions on lessons and appreciation classes attempted to elicit more information, asking the age at which those experiences had taken place: when the respondents were younger than 12, between 12 and 17, or from 18 to 24 years old. The age categories thus correspond roughly to three stages of schooling: elementary, high school, and college. No attempt was made to find out how often young people in each age group were given lessons or appreciation classes, nor was there any way to assess the quality of the experience.

Table 1 evokes images of little girls in tutus and teenagers in high-school plays, of Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts earning merit badges in crafts. Clearly, many people take certain kinds of lessons—and not others—during each period of youth. More than half of all those who took ballet lessons, for example, did so before age 12, while acting lessons are more common between ages 12 and 17. After age 18, music lessons are rare indeed. Most surprising, perhaps, is the fact that so few had lessons of any kind during more than one of the three periods of their youth.

Table 2 tells us that art and music appreciation classes are also closely related to age: While fewer than 20% of the respondents

Table 1. Basic Socialization Experiences: Lessons

Type of Lessons	None	Lessons Before Age 12	Lessons From Ages 12-17 Only	Lessons From Ages 18-24 Only	Lessons Before Age 12 & From 12-17	Lessons Before Age 12 & From 18-24	Lessons From 12-17 & 18-24 yrs. old	Lessons During All Three Periods
Music	54.0%	11.8%	17.9%	2.2%	8.2%	.5%	1.9%	3.6%
Visual Arts	80.9	.9	9.2	5.7	.8	.1	1.6	1.0
Acting	90.3	.4	4.9	2.2	.3	.0	.6	.3
Ballet	93.1	4.1	.8	.9	.8	.04	.1	.3
Creative Writing	84.5	.2	5.4	7.8	.04	.1	1.6	.4
Crafts	78.0	1.5	12.9	4.6	.9	.1	1.5	.5

Table 2. Basic Socialization Experiences: Appreciation Classes

Type of Classes	None	Classes Before Age 12	Classes From Ages 12-17 Only	Classes From Ages 18-24 Only	Classes Before Age 12 & From 12-17	Classes Before Age 12 & From 18-24	Classes From 12-17 & 18-24 yrs. old	Classes During All Three Periods
Art Appreciation/ Art History	82.5%	.3%	4.9%	10.2%	.3%	.0%	1.2%	.2%
Music Appreciation	80.7	1.2	7.6	8.6	.5	.1	.9	.5

took such classes, they tended to do so between the ages of 18 and 24. The response pattern suggests that this type of arts-related activity takes place in college, and is likely to have been voluntary. We have no way of knowing, however, why people in that age group elected to take such classes.

Art lessons and appreciation classes are, of course, the most formal means of socialization in the arts. Less formal, but perhaps equally important, are those experiences which teach young people to be "consumers" of art. Table 3 describes socialization experiences in the form of attendance at arts events and exposure to classical music in the home. Here, SPPA results do not tell us at what age those experiences took place; they do indicate, however, that roughly 70% of the respondents had no such exposure to the arts while they were growing up. They also tell us that, for the overwhelming majority of the remaining 30%, such experiences were only occasional.

So far, analysis of the SPPA data has provided some interesting insights about individuals and their socialization in the arts. These individual indicators provide a three-dimensional perspective on socialization experiences. The first dimension tells us whether or not the individual had a certain experience. The second dimension focuses on when—at what period of the person's youth—two types of experience occurred. The third dimension is somewhat more complicated. By looking at multiple experiences within each of the three types (lessons, appreciation classes,

Table 3. Basic Socialization Experiences: Home Exposure and Attendance

	Never	Occasionally	Often
Parents or other adults listened to classical music or opera	71.2%	20.5%	8.3%
Taken to art museums or galleries	67.9	27.6	4.6
Taken to plays, dance or classical music performances	69.5	25.7	4.8

and exposure to the arts), and finding out whether the experiences took place during one or more of the age periods, the third dimension provides an indicator—albeit crude—of the depth of socialization in the arts.

But "depth" is a qualitative word, and the SPPA did not ask questions about the quality of arts-related experiences. How, then, did we construct that indicator of the depth of socialization?

To begin with, we created indices by assigning a score or value to each experience, whether lesson, appreciation class, or attendance at an art event. For example, an individual who had both music and acting lessons before the age of 12 would be given a score of 2, one "point" for each experience in a single time period. Another person may have had art lessons between the ages of 18 and 24, and music lessons during all three periods of his youth. That person would receive a total of 10 points, 3 for the art lessons and 7 for the music lessons. The more types of lessons a person has had, and the more those lessons occurred in all three periods of youth, the higher the score on the index. Thus, in this category of experience, an individual could earn a score ranging from zero (no lessons) to 42 (every kind of lesson during all three periods of youth). Similarly, an individual who took art appreciation classes could score as many as 14 points, while the range of scores for the home exposure and early attendance index is 0 to 6.

At this point, three indices of the depth of arts-related experiences have been created:

- An index of the number and timeframe of lessons;
- An index of appreciation lessons taken during the same three timeframes; and
- An index of childhood attendance at concerts, plays, and other arts-related events.

The fourth and final index combines all three of the above indices to create a single index indicating the degree of socialization each individual has experienced. The range of this index is from 0 (no socialization experiences) to 62 (the maximum number of experiences possible in all three of the time periods of youth).

Did any individual who answered the questionnaire actually score 62? How many scored zero? How were the scores of all 2,678 valid responses[2] distributed between 0 and 62? And what is the meaning of these masses of statistics? How are we to interpret differences of a single point?

Analysis is made much easier once each index is divided into categories based on the distribution of individual scores.[3] Categories for the indices can be constructed by referring to the point-system set forth in Table 4.

Tables 5 and 6 explain in more detail how those "socialization points" were awarded in each of the first two indices of arts-related experience, lessons and appreciation classes.

The third component of the combined socialization index—attendance at concerts, plays, and other arts-related events and exposure to classical music and opera while growing up—is differently constructed, as indicated in Tables 4 and 7. Table 4 indicates the number of points assigned to these experiences for the purpose of creating the combined socialization index (the fourth index), and Table 7 divides the two attendance experiences into eight categories in ascending order of intensity.

Finally, by combining the data from the first, second, and third indices, we arrive at an index of "total socialization," one which measures—again crudely—a fourth dimension to the description of socialization experiences (Table 8). This fourth dimension, which groups experiences across different areas, may be labelled "breadth."

Tables 5 to 8 give us a general indication of the distribution of socialization experiences in the population. The results are somewhat dismaying: 43% of all respondents admit to having had no lessons of any sort. About 75% had no appreciation courses, and

[2] The number of valid responses used for each specific analysis may vary slightly because of missing data.

[3] The difference between categories represents a hierarchical relationship. A higher score means greater breadth and/or depth of arts-related experiences, but there is no fixed ratio of category values: 4 is not twice as much as 2, nor does it represent a fixed level of increase. Given the diversity of dimensions being measured and the imprecision of their measurement, a hierarchical indicator was the best that could be achieved.

Table 4. Illustrating the Point System for Indexing Socialization Experiences

Index	Category	No. of Points
Lessons	0	None
	1	1-2
	2	3-5
	3	6-10
	4	11-42
Appreciation classes	0	None
	1	1-2
	2	3-4
	3	5-7
	4	8-14
Home exposure and early attendance*	–	0-6
Combined index	0	None
	1	1-3
	2	4-6
	3	7-11
	4	12-62

* Points were allocated for each of three types of early exposure (Table 3) based on frequency, and added to the combined socialization index. Two points were scored for "often," one for "occasionally," and zero for "never," yielding a maximum score of 6.

Table 5. Socialization Index: Lessons

Category		
0	No lessons before age 25.	43.0%
1	One or 2 different lesson experiences before age 12 or 1 lesson experience at age 12-17. (Score 1-2)	18.5%
2	Up to 5 different types of lessons before age 12, or other combination of lessons totaling 5 points. Not including lessons in one area at ages 12-17 and 18-24.	15.4%
3	Six to 10 lesson socialization points. Must include lessons in at least 2 different areas. Could include lessons in 1 area for all 3 age groups.	15.1%
4	More than 10 lesson socialization points. Lessons in at least 2 areas for more than one age group.	8.0%

Table 6. Socialization Index: Appreciation Classes

Category	
0 No appreciation classes.	74.9%
1 Two class experiences before age 12 or 1 class experience between ages 12 and 17. (Score 1-3)	6.9%
2 Two class experiences before age 18, or 2 experiences in same area before age 18 or 2 experiences with 1 between age 18 and 24 (Score 4-6)	8.6%
3 As many as 3 experiences in 1 area or 1 experience at any age in each area. (Score 7-11)	8.0%
4 Experiences in both areas with the majority occurring late in youth. (Score 8-14)	1.7%

Table 7. Childhood Attendance at Concerts, Plays, and Other Arts-Related Events

Category[a]	
None	57.4%
Went to art museums or galleries occasionally	11.4%
Attended performances occasionally	9.2%
Went to art museums or galleries often	8%
Attended performances often	1.3%
Both activities occasionally	14.4%
Went to art museums often and attended performances occasionally	2.1%
Attended performances often and went to art museums occasionally	1.8%
Both activities often	1.8%

[a] These categories were neither given scores nor used in the computation of the combined index of socialization (Table 8) because they are constructed by using only two (i.e., attendance at art museums and performances) of the three exposure experiences. See footnote on Table 4.

Table 8. Combined Index of Socialization

0	Experienced none of the 11 socialization activities.	29.5%
1	Experienced at least 1 and as many as 3 different activities or 1 experience at age 18-24. (Score 1-3)	24.5%
2	Experienced at least 1 and as many as 6 different activities (at youngest age) or 1 experience in both 12-17 and 18-24 age groups. (Score 4-6)	15.5%
3	Experienced as many as 8 different activities or several at different age levels. (Score 7-11)	14.0%
4	Experienced as many as 8 different activities and/or several different activities at later ages or in successive age groups. (Score 12 or more)	16.5%

less than 10% had the equivalent of more than two appreciation classes during different periods. Almost 60% say they had never been to a concert, play, or art museum during their youth. Only about 20% both attended performances and went to art galleries, even occasionally. Very few (about 16%) had what we would call reasonably deep and broad participation in arts-related activities

At the happier end of the spectrum, the distribution of all socialization activities (Table 8) shows that about 70% of all respondents had some kind of socialization experience, and 23% indicate that they have had experiences equivalent to taking art-related lessons during all three time-periods covered (Table 5).

These results suggest that we are a nation that has grown up with only marginal involvement in formal or informal training and experience in the arts—a discouraging conclusion, especially in view of the major efforts of recent years to increase exposure to the arts. Is there any comfort to be had from the SPPA statistics? Indeed there is, for the socialization described as having occurred during youth (prior to age 24) was experienced by adults whose

ages varied from 25 to over 62. Data presented in Table 9 shows a definite relationship between age and socialization. The older a respondent is at the time of the survey, the less likely it is that he/she will have had one of the formal arts-related socialization experiences. This pattern seems to have evolved continuously over the last four decades, as each succeeding age category has apparently had more arts-related socialization during youth. The one exception to this rule is in the area of hearing classical music or opera in the home, where there is little difference across age groups.

Care must be taken, however, not to over-interpret these results. Some of the differences may be attributable to poor memory, since each succeeding age group must go farther back to recall relevant experiences. A small number of "Oh yes, I'd forgotten" cases could change the results significantly, because many individuals had only one or very few experiences.

There is still another way to group those 2,678 valid responses. We would like to know whether those little girls in tutus went on to participate in high-school plays, or if the Boy Scouts also took music lessons. To examine this aspect of socialization in the arts, we use a multivariate statistical technique called factor analysis. Factor analysis is not as daunting as it sounds. It merely asks a certain kind of question: Have the people who did activity A also done activity B? It repeats the question for all possible pairs, and uses the results to indicate the strength of an association among groups of activities; in other words, is someone who took ballet lessons likely to have visited art museums? Or would that person prefer attending concerts? The results of this kind of analysis tell us which experiences tend to occur together.

Seven groups or "factors" were created from that mass of respondents; five of the factors take both age and subject matter into account, demonstrating that both are important. For example, one group of individuals (Factor 1) seems to achieve most of its arts-related socialization across a broad spectrum of activities, but during only one period (age 18 to 24) of youth. A second group (Factor 3) has roughly the same kind of activity pattern as Factor 1, but during the high-school years. Two groups are more focused, Factor 5 on appreciation classes before the age of 18, and

Table 9. Socialization Experiences by Age Group at Time of SPPA Interview

Age Group	Never attended a play, dance, classical concert, or art museum in youth	Never had a music or art appreciation class prior to Age 25	Never had music, acting, writing, ballet, art, or craft lessons prior to Age 25	Never had an arts-related socialization experience prior to Age 25	Never heard classical music or opera played in the home during youth
18-24 yrs. old	44.2%	*73.0%	*22.5%	*12.5%	70.1%
25-31 yrs. old	48.9	62.4	25.2	14.8	69.3
32-42 yrs. old	56.8	68.8	40.3	26.5	70.5
43-61 yrs. old	60.7	78.4	52.2	37.1	70.4
62 + yrs. old	71.7	87.7	64.7	48.2	75.7
Average for all age groups	57.4	74.9	43.0	29.5	71.2

* Many respondents still in school as well as not having reached age at which many people have appreciation classes.

Factor 6 on lessons during grade school. Finally, two groups are very focused on subject matter: Factor 4 people take ballet lessons at all ages, while those of Factor 7 concentrate on art lessons (training) between the ages of 18 and 24. The last group, Factor 2, consists of people who had significant exposure to the arts during all three periods of youth, through visits to art museums and attendance at performances, and through hearing classical music at home.

The groups, or "factors," account for less than half of the variance in socialization activities, which means that most people with some experience do not exhibit a regular pattern of arts-related socialization. This suggests that much socialization in the arts is haphazard. For those individuals whose experience is characterized by a close relationship with a particular factor, there is more of a pattern, but it may also reflect a narrow perspective either in terms of content or time. Later we shall see that both content and time play important roles in predicting adult arts-related behavior.

Which of these approaches—factor analysis or the indices of socialization—would be the most satisfactory basis for subsequent analyses? The choice is obvious: Because many people who experienced arts-related socialization cannot be linked to any of the seven groups or "factors," the socialization indices are more useful. They permit us to take into account all the socialization experiences described by the SPPA. Factor scores would not. Nevertheless, factor analysis can help to explain some of the variations in group behavior, as we will see in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER THREE

Participation in the Arts

THE NOTION of "participation in the arts" has a democratic ring to it that is especially appropriate to our part of the Americas. As the Smithsonian Institution proudly declared on one of its posters, we are a "nation of nations." The United States has been built by peoples who brought with them a rich mélange of cultural traditions, creating in their homes and local communities forms of art not always recognized by the academy. The vast numbers of quilt-makers and potters, of folk-singers and square-dancers, the itinerant painters, the poets and attic scribblers were both creators and consumers of art. In urbanized 20th-century America, however, neither the process of acquiring the necessities of life nor the need to provide our own entertainment requires us to engage in arts-related activities. How, then, will the arts be supported?

We as a nation have long believed that, without widespread public participation, the arts in America will languish. In 1833 the American philosopher Margaret Fuller pointed out that there has always been a great difference between America and the Old World in this matter of patronage of the arts. "When an immortal poet was secure of only a few copyists to circulate his works," she wrote, "there were princes and nobles to patronize literature and the arts. Here is only the public."[1] Today more than ever, public participation in arts-related activities is essential, and we need to know more about how people come to devote part of their leisure time to the arts.

In order to find out whether there is a relationship between early socialization and that indispensable public patronage, we must analyze the SPPA data for information about the levels and

[1] From an essay by Margaret Fuller in the *New York Tribune*, 1833.

patterns of adult participation. As always, however, measurement is not easy. We must begin by defining exactly what it is that we are measuring.

In our society, there are three basic types of adult arts-related participation:

- ❖ Audience participation, where people attend concerts or other live performances, or go to museums and galleries;
- ❖ Media-related participation, where people partake of arts activities through television, radio, or recordings;
- ❖ Direct participation, where people are the artists, instrumentalists, dancers, or actors.

The SPPA asked people whether they had participated in any of those three kinds of activities during the previous year, and if so, how often. Analysis of the answers to even such apparently simple questions, however, is full of pitfalls. For example, Tables 10 and 11 reveal a surprisingly high level of all three types of participation. There is evidence that some of those numbers may be too high. The design of the questions can lead to confusion because they are asked with no qualifiers as to the extent of partic-

Table 10. Participation during the Previous Year[a]

Type of Participation	Live Audience Participation	Media Participation
Jazz Performance	9.6%	29.2%
Classical Music	10.8	34.8
Opera	1.8	17.1
Musical Play or Operetta	18.2	25.0
Non-Musical Play	10.9	26.1
Ballet	3.4	15.5
Visited Art Gallery/Art Museum	21.5	22.7
Read Novels, Short Stories, Poetry or Plays	—	56.7
Attended Art or Craft Fair	41.1	—

[a] The participation rates in this Table are based on the November-December 1982 interviews and may differ from the typical results of the full survey sample.

Table 11. Direct Participation in the Arts during the Previous Year

Type of participation	
Lessons in literature, creative writing, art, photography, crafts, ballet, music, etc.	10.2%
Pottery, ceramics jewelry or similar crafts	12.4
Weaving, crocheting, quilting, needlepoint, sewing or similar crafts	34.6
Musical or non-musical play, opera or ballet production (not performer)	2.6
Musical Performance (not performer)	.8
Creative writing (not course work)	6.7
Art Photographs, movies or video tapes	10.5
Painting, drawing, sculpture or printmaking	10.3

ipation or its quality. For example, jazz concerts are not defined, and the musical may have been a community theatre production of "Annie Get Your Gun." Classical music could include a Bach prelude for organ in church, and opera on television might have been an aria lasting less than 15 minutes and sung by Luciano Pavarotti as part of a variety show. The possibilities are endless: Taking art photographs could be interpreted as producing any reasonably decent snapshot of flowers in the park.

Yet another problem can lead to overestimates of participation: Some people may have wanted to gain the approval of the interviewer or enhance their status by answering in the affirmative. Even among Margaret Fuller's democratic American public, it is good to be seen as a patron of the arts.

All of these problems bring into question the accuracy of participation estimates and the usefulness of the data for compari-

son. Nevertheless, when responses to participation questions are compared to other responses, there may be a conservative bias to the results; exaggeration of participation should tend to dilute relationships between participation and other characteristics such as socialization. Thus any positive findings may have been reduced by the extent of exaggeration.

One technique for overcoming data problems such as these is to develop less precise indicators of the behavior being measured, that is, to accommodate error in the estimates of participation by broadening the categories with which it is measured. The indices of participation created in this study are examples of that approach. Because it was not possible to measure reliably the level of participation within specific activities, the aggregation took place across activity categories. For example, attending live performances was used as the aggregate measure for attending jazz concerts, classical concerts, opera, musicals, plays, and/or ballets. As in the case of the socialization indices, each category was assigned a value: Non-attendance equals 0; attendance at 1 or 2 events of any type equals 1; attendance at more than 2 events equals 2. Paradoxically, this hierarchical measure of participation is both more crude than an accurate count of actual attendance at performances, and more accurate because it absorbs some measure of exaggeration.

Ten indices of adult arts-related participation were developed, and the distribution of responses is reported in Table 12. Each index has slightly different values, which explains the varying number and location of blank spaces on the table. For some activities such as ballet, even aggregating several related activities did not create a large group of high-level participants, so there are two blank spaces. For others, particularly those activities that include television, the rate of participation includes well over half the respondents. But because the questions asked only whether people had attended performances once or more than once during the past year, these indices are only approximate measures, and respondents in the same category may have very different rates of participation. Nevertheless, the indices are sufficiently accurate to support an analysis of the relationship between socialization and current adult participation, without fear of misleading results.

As we have seen, the pattern of socialization in the arts tends to be related to the age of the people who answered the SPPA questionnaire, with younger respondents reporting more lessons, appreciation classes, and attendance at arts-related activities than those who were older when the questions were asked. Do adults have similarly different patterns of participation in arts-related activities, depending on age? SPPA data provides some answers to the question, interesting because they probably correspond to conventional wisdom on the subject. It comes as no surprise, for example, that younger people are more likely to participate in jazz-related activities than are older people. Gallery and museum attendance is more popular in the middle groups (not to be confused with middle age). Older people are evidently more interested in the performing arts, except for the oldest group, where participation declines; age in excess of 62 years seems to curtail activities away from home. Media-related participation follows the same general pattern, although the relationship is weaker.

Figure 1 graphically presents the relationship of age to each of the participation indices. The lines show a general downward slope with increasing age, with some exceptions in intermediate age groups. The steady decline is most noticeable in those activities involving direct participation in the arts as artist or performer. The other kinds of activities show a characteristic hump, indicating increased participation in the middle age groups and a renewed downward slope for the upper age group.

Unfortunately, the SPPA data cannot explain the differences in participation at various ages. Can the "hump" in the intermediate age groups be attributed to factors such as more disposable income? Are the oldest people simply less interested in participating, or are they physically less able to do so? Does the decline in participation by those in the oldest age group reflect their lower levels of socialization in the arts? How can we explain the fact that, in each of the ten participation indices, younger people are not more likely to participate in the arts?

For most adults, participation in the arts is a leisure-time activity, and it is possible that people from differing generations have differing patterns of leisure behavior, depending on socialization or other factors.

Although we cannot come to any conclusions about genera-

Table 12. Indices of Participation in the Arts during the Previous Year

	Activity	Never %	Once %	Twice %	Once or twice %	More than twice %
(1)	ATTENDANCE Attending live performances of jazz, classical music, opera, plays, musicals &/or ballets	69.2	—	—	23.6	7.2
(2)	VISUAL ART Visiting galleries or craft shows, watching TV programs on art	41.4	—	—	38.4	20.2
(3)	Doing art: crafts, making movies, photogaphs, painting, drawing, sculpture, etc.	71.4	17.6	7.6	—	3.4
(4)	MUSIC Attending any musical performance or watching or listening on TV, radio or records	45.4	—	—	27.1	27.5
(5)	Playing music	43.8	—	—	28.5	27.7

(6) THEATRE Watching plays, acting, writing, working behind scenes	53.7	24.2	11.9	—	10.2
(7) Off-stage help providing support for stage or musical performance	97.0	**2.5	** .5	—	—
(8) LITERATURE Attending plays, reading fiction, watching plays on TV, writing	33.9	—	—	47.3	18.9
(9) Reading, listening to, taking lessons, or doing creative writing	72.3	19.6	—	—	*8.1
(10) BALLET Attending ballet, dancing in ballet, watching ballet, on TV, stage support role	78.9	—	—	20.0	1.1

* More than once

** Support for one, support for both

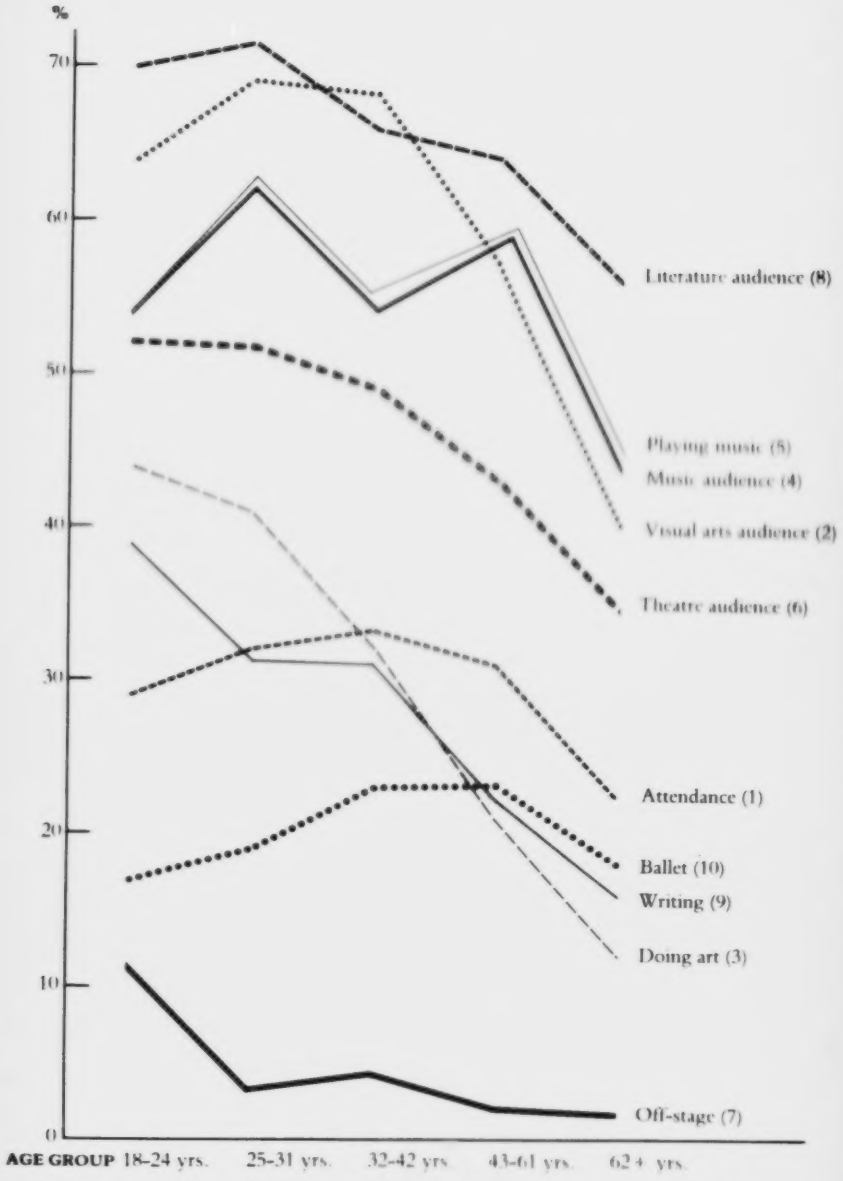

Figure 1 Indices of Participation by Age Groups: Percent participating in arts-related activities at least once during the previous year

tional patterns, we can learn something by applying the factor analysis techniques used in the study of socialization. In addition to arts-related activities, general leisure activities like going to the movies, sports, exercise, etc., were included on the SPPA questionnaire. This permits us to examine arts-related activities in the context of all leisure-time pursuits, and to identify the extent of crossover between the arts and other types of activities.

Again, the results are somewhat discouraging for those of us who are dedicated to the arts. By far the largest group of people surveyed—those who are part of a general standard leisure-activities group—do not participate in any arts-related activities in their spare time.[2] In fact, about half the sample (and the general population) does not have a highly-structured pattern of leisure activity. People relax in many different ways, but most do nothing beyond watching television with enough regularity to be considered part of a group.

There are, however, small groups of people who have fairly regular leisure habits, and some of these groups are heavily oriented towards the arts. It is interesting that only two of the factors are mixed, revealing crossover patterns where people spend concentrated leisure time on activities as diverse as going to museums and gardening.

Analysis of patterns of adult participation in the arts and of the use of leisure time in general thus reveals that, apart from the large group that has no particular pattern of leisure activity at all,[3] there is little mixing of the arts with other leisure behaviors in a patterned or regular way.

The results also reveal an unhappy fact: The arts have a small group of devotees, but in general they are hard-pressed to compete with other leisure activities for the attention of the public.

[2] This result parallels an earlier study that identified a general popular leisure factor. Using slightly different techniques, the earlier study also found a large portion of the sample (about half) to have no specific leisure pattern. See the Appendix for references to more details on this study.

[3] Diversity of leisure activity does not exclude the possibility of some occasional arts-related activity, but simply indicates such irregularity that no clear pattern can be said to exist.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Relationship Between Socialization and Participation in the Arts

THE BASIC SOCIALIZATION MODEL predicts that people with positive socialization experiences in a given kind of activity will be more likely to participate in that same kind of activity as adults. The idea is not new; indeed, many of us are familiar with the quotation from a poem by Alexander Pope, who wrote: " 'Tis education forms the common mind: Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclined."[1] Pope and the modern-day sociologist are expressing, each in his own way, a tenet of common wisdom. But does that tenet hold true in the case of the relationship between socialization and participation in the arts? Analysis of the SPPA data can answer that question in broad, general terms; it can also refine considerably our understanding of the efficiency of various types of socialization in promoting later participation.

Six categories of socialization are explored in order to assess their relationship to adult participation in the arts. They include four kinds of lessons (music, visual arts, other arts such as ballet, drama, writing, and crafts, and appreciation classes) and two kinds of audience-related activities (home exposure to the arts, and attendance at performances or visits to galleries and museums). In each case, the results of the SPPA data provide strong evidence supporting the hypothesis of Pope, the sociologists, and common wisdom across a broad range of activities.

Understanding the information presented in Figures 2, 3, and

[1] Alexander Pope's *Moral Essays: In Four Epistles to Several Persons* was first published in London in 1781. For a modern edition, see the same work under the title *Epistles to Several Persons*, Introduction and notes by James E. Wellington (Coral Gables, Florida: University of Miami Press, [1963]).

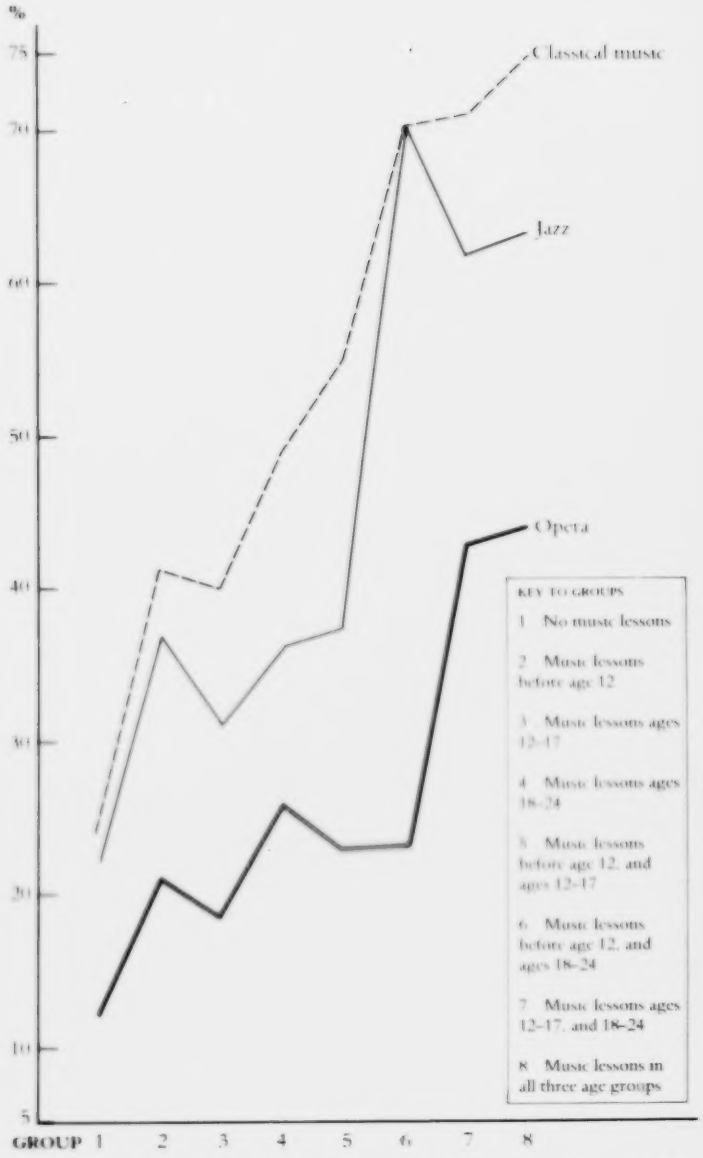

Figure 2 The Relationship of Music Lessons to Listening to Music on TV, Radio, or Records

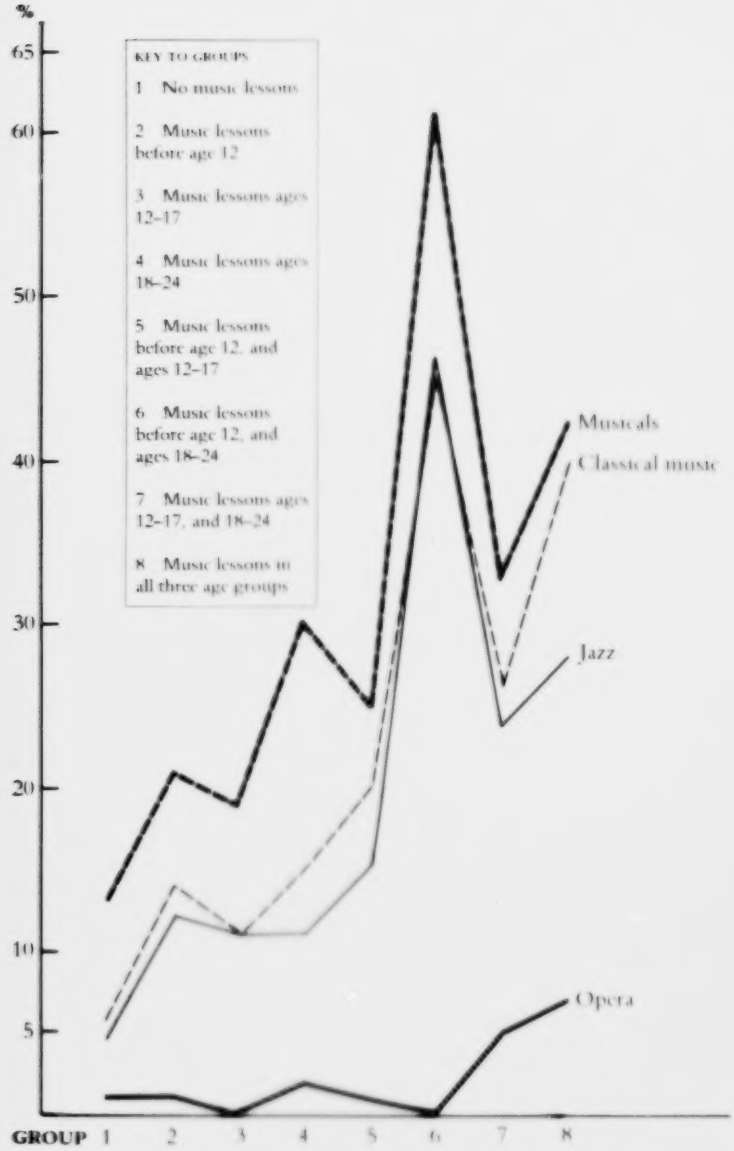

Figure 3 The Relationship of Music Lessons to Attendance at Performances

4 is perhaps more complicated than it looks, and it is important to specify exactly who we are talking about when we read the figure horizontally and vertically. The horizontal dimension has grouped respondents into eight groups. The groups are the same in all the figures. Anyone who belongs to one group (those who only took music lessons prior to age 12, for example) is automatically excluded from all the other groups. When we read the figure vertically, however, we are focusing on the percentage of people in one category of socialization who participate in each

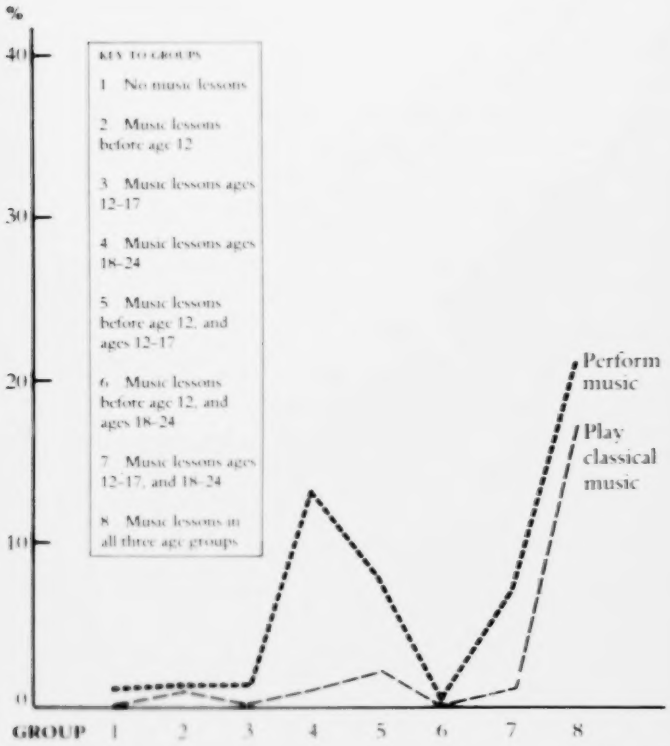
%
40
30
20
10
0
KEY TO GROUPS
1 No music lessons
2 Music lessons before age 12
3 Music lessons ages 12-17
4 Music lessons ages 18-24
5 Music lessons before age 12, and ages 12-17
6 Music lessons before age 12, and ages 18-24
7 Music lessons ages 12-17, and 18-24
8 Music lessons in all three age groups
Perform music
Play classical music
GROUP 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Figure 4 The Relationship of Music Lessons to Performing Music

activity as adults. We learn from Figure 2 that among those who only took music lessons prior to age 12, (Group 2), more than 40% said that they listened to classical music on television, radio, and recordings. About 37% said they listened to jazz, 22% said they attended musicals, etc. But when we add up the percentages on the vertical columns of the figures, the total is more than 100%. Clearly, there is some overlap here. Some of those people who only took music lessons prior to age 12 are participating in more than one music-related activity as adults. Nevertheless, the 40% who listen to classical music may not be the same people who attend musicals.

Childhood music lessons are good predictors of adult participation in music activities. Indeed, the more music lessons people had prior to age 24, the more likely they are to spend some of their leisure time on music. For example, the participation rate for those with music lessons during all three periods of youth is at least three times greater than for those with no music lessons, and can be more than 100 times greater. Having had lessons only before turning 12 means an increased adult participation rate varying from 10% to more than 100%. If lessons were the only predictor of the rate of participation, their impact could be considered very strong; however, conclusions about causal relationships must be tempered by the fact that little is known about other variables that act in combination with, or outside the effect of lessons.

Specific patterns of adult participation may differ according to activity, represented by the percentage scale. The differences in percentage show that, for one adult activity—listening to classical music on television, radio, or recordings—the increase from Group 1 (no music lessons) across the following seven groups of socialization experiences is almost unbroken. The relationship between these two activities (socialization and adult participation) is stronger as the age at which lessons occurred increases, and as the number of time-periods in which lessons were taken increases. In other words, long-term experience with music lessons during childhood and youth predicts an adult participation rate almost three times that for people who had no music lessons.

If a second activity line is tracked across lesson categories, a

slightly different pattern emerges. Figure 3 shows that attending classical concerts increases with the experience of lessons, but differs little based on the age at which lessons occurred—until we reach lessons in multiple time-periods that include people 18 to 24 years old (the last three groups).

The uneven or varying patterns for different types of participation indicate that the effects of socialization are uneven, and suggest the influence of other factors such as the quality of the socialization experience or the interaction of quality with age. Furthermore, opera and other activities that are attended by a small proportion of the population present a problem in statistical reliability because of the small number of respondents. For those activities, it is probably best to look at trends across several socialization characteristics to determine if they exhibit a common pattern.

A second perspective on the relationship between socialization and current participation is provided by Figure 5. Adult music-related participation has been aggregated into a single index. The music participation level is then compared to each music-lesson socialization category and shown on four bars. The results reflect those of Figures 2 to 4. As one moves from left to right, the total length of all four bars gets longer, indicating generally higher levels of participation. This is the expected result, because the index of musical activity is a condensed aggregate of all types of music participation activities, as shown on Figures 2 to 4.

But there is something different about the bar graph. It shows clearly that increased socialization (represented by movement from left to right across the graph) leads to a second type of increased participation. Notice how the three bars on the right in each group get progressively bigger. This shows that people who had music lessons when they were 18 to 24 years old are more likely to participate in multiple activities as adults; the difference in participation shows up most vividly in Groups 4, 5, 6, and 7, where these people are concentrated. Those with lessons in all three periods of youth are much more likely to be frequent participants as adults. This pattern is repeated many times for each type of socialization and participation.

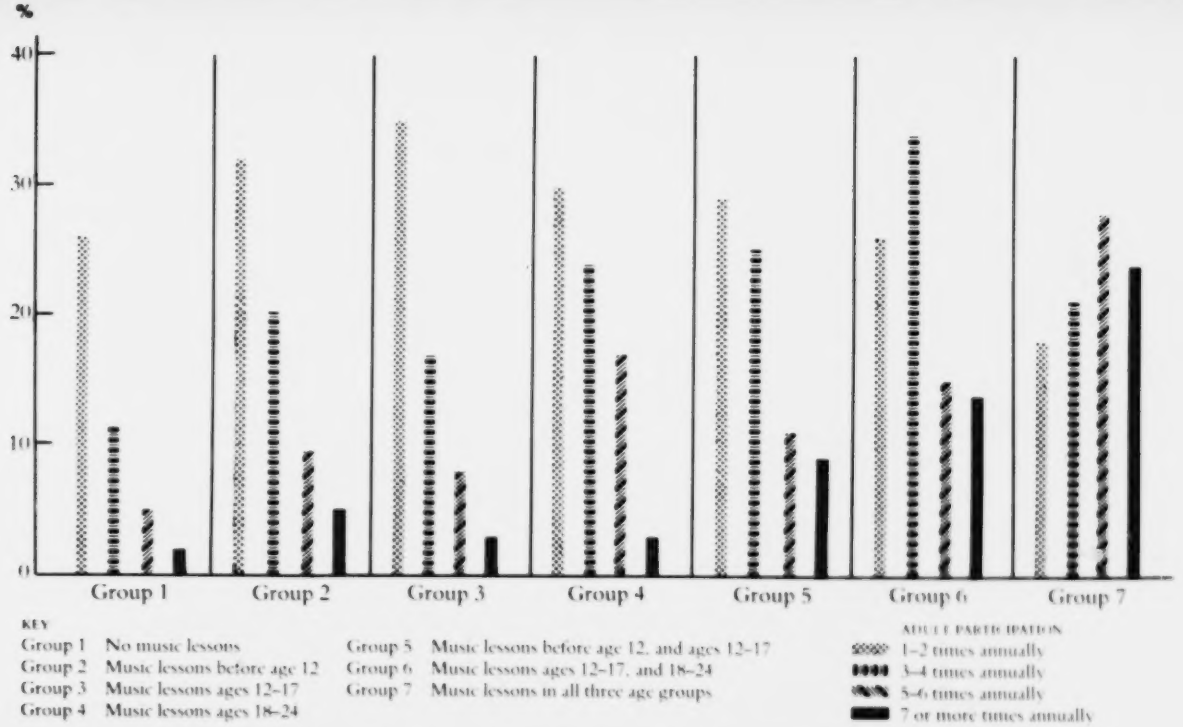

Figure 5 The Relationship of Music Lessons to the Index of Current Musical Participation

The pattern inferred from these results consists of two parts:

- Having some socialization in an art-related activity will be associated with a higher probability of adult participation in a similar activity;
- The greater the level of socialization (as measured by the index), the higher the level of adult participation will be.

Analysis of the SPPA data reveals that music lessons during childhood and youth markedly increase adult participation in activities focused on music. Is there a similarly strong relationship between socialization in the other arts and later participation?

In general, the relationship between art lessons and adult participation in visual arts looks very much like the pattern for music: Adult participation in most activities increases as levels of socialization increase. For example, as the level of art lessons increases within age groups and across several time periods of childhood and youth, the level of adult activity in which the individual actually produces a work of art also increases. The absence of art lessons while growing up markedly reduces later art-related activities; almost half of the people with no lessons spent their leisure time on something other than art. By contrast, only 8% of those who had art lessons when they were 18 to 24 years old failed to participate in visual arts activities, and everyone who had lessons in all three periods of youth participated. Moreover, there is a steady increase across lesson groups for the proportion with the highest visual arts activity. The one exception is that those who had lessons when they were 18 to 24 years old have a higher rate of participation than those who had lessons from 12 to 17 *and* before they were 12 years old.

There is another, new dimension to the results: Where the visual arts are concerned, the age at which the socialization experiences occurred is very important. For three of the six art-related activities, taking art lessons between the ages of 18 and 24 is a stronger indicator of adult participation than having lessons before age 12 or between ages 12 and 17. And for five of six adult activities, having lessons during adolescence is a stronger indicator of later participation than lessons prior to age 12. Knowing

when art lessons occurred provides additional information about the likely effect on adult behavior.

When we analyze the data for lessons in the other arts—acting, ballet, writing, and crafts—the basic relationship remains the same: If you had lessons while growing up, you are more likely to participate in that activity as an adult. But the effect of lessons at an older age varies somewhat in these categories of adult participation. For example, for ballet dancers the age at which lessons occurred is less important than taking those lessons in more than one time period prior to age 24. For those who took creative writing lessons, age is more important for later activities such as reading and attending performance, but less important for actually writing literature, drama, or poetry. On the other hand, the age at which lessons were taken is extremely important for predicting adult participation in crafts.

Lessons teach students how to participate in the arts as artists or performers, but not as patrons. Another strategy exists to socialize young people who might become adult patrons or consumers of the arts created or performed by others. In the absence of princes and noblemen to support the arts, those who appreciate them are very important people. Can arts appreciation classes, like art lessons, effectively train the consumers of art? Again, there is no data in the SPPA that permits us to draw cause-and-effect conclusions about the relationship between arts appreciation classes and later participation. We can evaluate a widely-held assumption, however, one that declares that individuals who had appreciation classes are more likely to participate in related activities than are those who had no such classes.

Not surprisingly, the SPPA data supports that assumption; by now, the general pattern is clear. Nevertheless, there are some differences between the effects of lessons and of appreciation classes on adult participation in the arts. The strongest relationship exists between appreciation classes in the visual arts and later attendance at events such as museum exhibitions; again, increased socialization increases adult participation.[2] For those who

[2] The reader is reminded that classes taken when older, or taken more frequently, increase the level of socialization.

become artists or performers, however, taking appreciation classes between the ages of 18 and 24 appears to be less important than it was in the case of lessons. Adult participation rates for crafts people, painters, and sculptors, for example, actually decline for those who took appreciation classes during that period.

The effect of arts appreciation classes on all adult participation in visual arts activities repeats the earlier pattern. Although more modest, there is an increased level of participation associated with socialization experiences occurring later or more frequently; in other words, more classes, or classes when older, mean a higher level of adult participation.[3]

There is also a positive relationship between music appreciation classes and adult participation, but it may be somewhat weaker than in the case of the visual arts. The effect of appreciation classes taken before the age of 12, for example, is negligible for most activities.[4] Participation rates increase significantly for those who took such classes during their high-school years, but the increase for college-age classes is not as strong. Furthermore, those who had classes during more than one period apparently do not participate at a higher rate than those with classes in a single period.

Does the same pattern persist when we look at the SPPA data on youthful participation as consumers of the arts? Respondents were asked about exposure to three types of arts events: visiting art galleries and museums, attending performances (classical concerts, ballet, and drama), and hearing classical music or opera in the home.

In the case of music, general results again confirm the expectation that this type of socialization has a positive relationship to adult participation. Apparently, early exposure "rubs off," or is associated with other socialization activities that have a combined effect on later participation, but the effects are not uniform. For example, those who indicated that they heard classical music or opera "often" were not more likely to attend concerts as adults;

[3] In this instance, level of participation means a greater variety of visual arts activities, or more activity in one or two areas.

[4] Note that, because of the small number of people involved, the sample of this group could not be tested separately.

but they *were* likely to enjoy media versions (television, radio, or recordings) of their favorite musical activities more often than people who had only occasional exposure when they were young.

Visiting art galleries or attending performances is another type of audience socialization, and the question asked by the SPPA focused on how often the experience occurred. Once again, the data demonstrates that adult participation increases with higher levels of early socialization. The strength of the relationship varies with different types of activities. It is strongest when the individual participated in identical behavior (such as visiting art galleries or watching television shows about the visual arts) both in youth and adulthood. It is much weaker when the adult is actually creating art; in this case, the behavior required is very different from the socialization experience as consumer of art.

What effect does the *frequency* of socialization experience as audience have on adult participation in the arts? To begin with, the frequency of visits to art galleries before age 24 has little or no bearing on whether an individual will later create works of art. Nor does it affect the index of adult visual-arts activities. Similarly, frequency of socialization experience in music has only a slight relationship to levels of adult activity. When early attendance is compared to the index of adult attendance at live performances (a comparison of relatively similar activities), it becomes clear that, although it helps to have had these socialization experiences, it makes little difference if people had them frequently or infrequently.

When youthful experiences as audience for art are combined into a single index, there is no change in the strength or shape of the relationship to later participation in the arts. Once again, while adult attendance increases if children had socialization experiences, the frequency of those experiences makes little difference to the level of adult participation. In other words, more is not better.

So far, the SPPA data allows us to come to four conclusions:

- Any socialization in the arts is likely to be reflected in higher rates of adult participation in related activities;

- ❖ For many activities, the age of socialization is an important predictor, especially socialization that occurred during the years between 18 and 24 (college age);
- ❖ Activities which socialize young people to be consumers of art are good predictors of later participation as audience, but not as good predictors of participation as artist or performer; and
- ❖ Lessons and appreciation classes are much more closely related to high levels of adult participation than are audience-socialization activities.

Important as these conclusions are, there is more to be learned from those useful tools called indices. Up to this point, we have been examining the relationships between individual adult activities and socialization experiences. Indices allow us to analyze more general indicators. Here, we are comparing indices of socialization (early arts-related experience) with indices of current participation. The results parallel those for individuals. For example, we know that for individuals, "more is better," and we expect that people with higher levels of socialization will also have higher levels of participation in the arts as adults. The indices also show the effects of multiple socialization experiences. Indeed, as the level of socialization in the arts increases, the absolute level of adult participation in arts-related activities goes continually upward, from 27.5% to 92.8%. At the same time, as the level of socialization goes up, the proportion of people who participate frequently also rises. This relationship is true for all four indices of current adult participation.

But those adults who responded to the SPPA questionnaire varied in age from 18 to 95, and the earlier analysis of socialization and participation showed that age made some differences. Younger people had higher socialization levels, and participation levels varied according to the age of respondents, creating a complex pattern depending on the subject and type of activity involved. We should, therefore, analyze the effects of age on the relationship between socialization and participation.

It would be very tedious to run through all of the foregoing analyses for each age group. Fortunately, there is a shorthand

technique for describing the magnitude of relationships between socialization and participation. It is called "correlation analysis," and simple correlations show how closely related a pair of characteristics is. Making these kinds of comparisons will permit us to assess the "effects" of socialization across age groups, *and* across categories of socialization and/or participation.

In this analysis, the strength of relationships is expressed by Spearman Rank Order coefficients (Rho) ranging from −1 to +1. Minus 1 indicates an inverse relationship: As the value of one characteristic goes up, the other comes down. Zero indicates that there is no relationship between pairs of characteristics: A change in the value of one has no effect on the value of another. A perfect positive relationship (every change in the value of one characteristic corresponds to a precisely proportional change in the other) is expressed by +1. In the social sciences, where behavior is usually the result of a complex set of circumstances, correlations of about .3 are acceptable, .5 is good, and .7 or .8 may be too good to be believable, especially if only two characteristics are being compared.

A matrix of correlation coefficients is used to describe the relationship between pairs of socialization experiences and current adult participation activities. In this matrix, a *single number* summarizes all of the results, albeit with some loss of information. For example, for individuals from 18 to 24 years old, the correlation coefficient of .25 tells us that there is a moderate positive relationship between childhood attendance at arts events and creating art as an adult. However, we also find that for people between 43 and 62 years old the coefficient is only .16; therefore, the relationship between childhood attendance at arts events and creating art as an adult is not as strong as it was for the 18- to 24-year-olds. Other kinds of information emerge from such analyses; for example, for people who are aged 62+, childhood attendance at arts events is a much better predictor of adult participation at music events than of actually creating art.

The correlations reveal many such differences. Indeed, one of the most persistent differences is that correlations between socialization and adult participation are often lower in the oldest

age group. Is it possible that the effects of socialization have worn off by the time an individual reaches age 62?

A second pattern reveals that correlations for creating visual or literary art are usually highest for the youngest respondents, those between 18 and 24 years old. Can we explain this because young people are much closer to their classes and the age when there are more opportunities for experimentation? As this age group assumes responsibility for jobs and families, will it become more difficult to maintain relatively high levels of activity in these areas?

A third general pattern reveals another prominent difference associated with the age of respondents. Middle-aged people (43 to 62 years old) are most likely to engage in sedentary audience activities. The delay in embarking on this kind of participation may be the result of changing socio-economic status and the aging of their children.

In some cases there is very little difference across age groups. For example, age does not seem to matter much when it comes to engaging in all visual arts activities prior to the age of 62. In other areas, such as creating art or attending musical performances, there are wide differences, depending on the age of respondents.

Thus we may conclude that the role played by the age of the respondents varies more with the type of adult activity than with the level or type of socialization experience.

The data allows us to make another point about the relationship of socialization to participation. The correlations between early lessons and adult creation of art are much higher than between either attendance or appreciation classes and similar adult participation. Furthermore, correlations between attendance or appreciation classes during youth, and adult attendance at arts-related events are not higher than the correlations between lessons and current attendance. These analyses reveal clearly that lessons in the arts are the strongest predictor of subsequent participation. It seems that "learning to do" is a better approach to socialization than "learning about."

Nevertheless, we must be cautious: Other factors, such as socio-economic status and demographics, play a role in determin-

ing the effect of socialization on adult participation. Indeed, factor analysis which took those characteristics into account reveals that there are no strong connections between specific socialization and participation characteristics—at least none that are stronger than the internal relationships (that is, relationships within either the participation or socialization characteristics). Nor are there any overriding predictors of either socialization or participation among socio-demographic characteristics. Thus, while it is possible to identify relationships between individual experiences, much of the variance in current adult participation remains unexplained in terms of socialization or socio-demographic characteristics. The unexplained variance is probably largely the result of the complex development of attitudes towards leisure activities and the interaction of those attitudes and other key factors in people's lives.

CHAPTER FIVE

Contrary Cases

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA from the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts has so far focused on the behavior of the majority in each of the sub-groups identified. The SPPA data allows us to define two kinds of majorities, one that participates in the arts as adults, and one that does not:

- ❖ If a sub-group is composed of people with significant socialization in the arts, the majority of that group continues to participate.
- ❖ If a sub-group consists of individuals with no socialization experiences during childhood and youth, the majority of that group does not participate in the arts as adults.

But what do we know about the minority in each of those cases, those with high levels of socialization who no longer participate, or those with no socialization who now, as adults, dedicate at least part of their leisure time to arts-related activities?

Why do some people behave differently from the majority? To find out, we will employ something called "exception analysis." But we cannot possibly examine all of the factors that contribute to these differences. Indeed, the data provided by the SPPA permits us to analyze only a few characteristics of the minorities in each category.

Of the three types of variables examined in this study—socialization, participation, and socio-demographic characteristics—only the third provides a basis for comparison of majority and minority respondents in each sub-group. Specifically, the research question being asked is this: How do the minority respondents—the contrary cases—on a particular participation question differ socio-demographically from the majority respondents? For example, are the 2% of unsocialized opera-atten-

ders richer, better-educated, or more likely to live in cities than the majority of unsocialized respondents who do not attend opera?

To answer the research question, we must first establish what constitutes a majority-minority situation. In terms of percentages, a 51-49 split would not be significant. Instead, this study assumes a 70% to 30% split. In other words, wherever there is a *strong* relationship between socialization and participation, a set of contrary cases exists. Thus for each question on current adult participation, at least 70% of the respondents must have been socialized at a specific level, or have had no socialization experiences at all.

Secondly, the socio-demographic characteristics of the two groups—majority and minority—must be compared. Seven socio-demographic factors are significant: age, income, marital status, race, sex, education, and the size of the community in which the respondent lives.[1]

Who, then, are the unsocialized participators? They share four key characteristics:

- ❖ They are almost always better-educated than the majority, the unsocialized non-participators.
- ❖ They usually have a higher income, but often their current arts-related activities do not require money to support participation (instead of attending the opera, they watch it on television).
- ❖ If they are involved in jazz-related activities, or are creating art, they are younger than the majority.
- ❖ They are more likely to live in urban areas, even when participation would not be affected by the availability of arts-related facilities such as concert halls, dance studios, or museums.

[1] For each factor, the mean value for participants and nonparticipants is compared using a t-test to estimate the probability that sample differences are statistically different in the population. Because a large number of tests (64 x 7 variables) were performed, a very stringent probability ($p \leq .005$) was used to judge significance. Therefore, where differences are reported, they are very likely to represent real differences in the total population.

The opposites of the unsocialized participators are, of course, the socialized nonparticipants, and, as might be expected, these nonparticipants often exhibit the opposite characteristics. They tend to have less education, to live in more rural areas, and to be slightly older.

The results for socialized nonparticipants are different from the results for unsocialized participants in another way. Of 18 current activities on the indices, eight show no differences on any of the seven socio-demographic factors. Whatever it is that keeps highly-socialized individuals away from the arts-related activities enjoyed by at least 70% of people socialized like them, it is not explained by the socio-demographic characteristics examined here. Could these contrary individuals be representative of the problem of imprecise measurement? The lack of precise qualitative or quantitative measurements of socialization experiences may have grouped them erroneously with respondents who had more or better socialization experiences. Or perhaps these highly-socialized people no longer enjoy the particular activity. The little girls dancing in tutus may have become women who would rather go canoeing.

CHAPTER SIX

Art, Artists, and the Public

NOW THAT WE KNOW something concrete about the relationship between socialization in the arts and later participation in arts-related activities, how can we put that knowledge to use? What can be done to increase enjoyment of the arts among our fellow-citizens who, as we have seen, have been only marginally exposed to the excitement, joy, and practical rewards of music, drama, dance, and the visual arts?

The easiest way to increase participation would be to provide opportunities for people who have expressed a desire to spend more of their leisure time on arts-related activities. Is there unsatisfied demand for more opportunities to participate in the arts? The SPPA revealed that demand always exceeds levels of current participation, but, depending on the activity, it varies greatly in intensity. For example, no less than 32.7% of respondents would like to attend more musicals, but only 7.6% expressed an interest in seeing more opera.

Based on the expressed desire for more participation, how many people might attend arts-related events in the future? We can estimate their numbers by adding current participants to nonparticipants who expressed an interest in attending. The results suggest that there are significant opportunities to increase participation; we learn, for example, that it might be *possible* to increase the audience for opera by 365%, provided that there were no barriers to participation.

But there *are* barriers to realizing the desire for increased participation, some external and others self-generated. Not everyone who would like to attend four operas instead of one will be able to do so. Therefore, the *real* potential for an increase in attendance is probably much smaller, closer to current rates of participation in each activity.

What is the effect of socialization on demand for increased participation? Surprisingly, it is not a major factor, except indirectly. Demand for more participation in arts-related activities is much greater among current participants (ranging from 50% to 68%) than it is among those who do not now participate (ranging from only 7% to 25%). We already know that socialization is related to higher levels of participation; thus we might expect current participants to demand opportunities for more participation. There is also somewhat heavier demand for increased participation among those non-participants who had more socialization experiences than others in their group. Both groups, however, reported barriers to increased participation.

The SPPA identified 21 different barriers to attendance at seven types of events. Three of them—time, cost, and lack of availability—were cited most frequently. Barriers associated with health problems were the most common only for the older age groups.

No matter which arts-related activity is chosen by those who want to increase their participation, the cost in time and money of doing so is of major importance. The fact that visiting art galleries is often free is reflected in a lower proportion of respondents mentioning cost as a barrier, and a higher proportion mentioning time.

Sometimes, the barriers to increased participation are external: People may work so hard that there is literally no time for leisure pursuits of any sort. Similarly, some people may earn so little money that all "costly" leisure activities are prohibitive. In other cases, however, people are making choices about the use of their leisure time and discretionary funds that amount to the establishment of priorities, whether consciously or unconsciously.

The existence of priorities implies value judgments. If people have made such choices in the past, particularly with regard to the use of time, it is doubtful that those choices will change unless there is a change in attitude. Therefore, demand for increased participation must surely be discounted to the extent that real-choice behavior has determined participation in the past.

Can attitudes be changed? The SPPA data offers an intriguing possibility. The logic of the results implies that, because higher levels of socialization are associated with higher levels of adult

participation in arts-related activities, and because demand for increased participation is greatest among those who already participate, increased efforts to socialize young people in the arts might lead eventually to a change in attitudes.

The implications of these results for policy and program design are significant. If higher levels of current adult participation are a goal, then inducing higher levels of socialization may be one key to achieving that goal. Although the SPPA does not provide sufficiently reliable and unambiguous data to support conclusions about direct causal linkages, we do know that socialization, especially certain activities such as having lessons, is strongly associated with current participation and with the demand for more participation among current participants and non-participants alike. We also know that people who had lessons later in life (ages 18 to 24) are likely to participate more than those who had their training while very young. In terms of designing training programs, maximum effect is possible only if the training is continuous, or at least occurs over several different timeframes. Training that occurs only once and at a young age will have the least effect on adult participation.

There are at least two possible explanations for this pattern. Training received only a few years ago is more likely to have an effect than training received 20 or 30 years ago. Other analyses show that the correlation between socialization and participation decreases somewhat with age. Second, training that takes place between the ages of 18 and 24 is more likely to be voluntary, and therefore reflects the real interests of the individual. Because it is something people want to do, they are more likely to continue to pursue it in later life. Thus a program that offers the opportunity for later training during youth is more likely to produce more patrons and practitioners of the arts than programs offered at an earlier age.

There is very little known about the quality of earlier socialization experiences, and therefore we cannot argue for programs that include involuntary features like training quotas. The process at work is complex enough to make it impossible to tell exactly *how* socialization influences later behavior. There are several possibilities, however. Socialization may instill a real love for the

arts, or an intellectual connection of the sort that draws the former piano student to piano recitals to admire the technical skill being demonstrated. Feelings of guilt may be important in cases where individuals were indoctrinated with the idea that they *should* enjoy the arts; they might be the once- or twice-a-year audience. A kind of guilt may also drive parents to expose their children to the arts, thereby accounting for considerable attendance at performances, and probably much of the participation as audience for recordings and for arts-related programs on television and radio. Of course all of these possible linkages are affected by current environmental factors such as cost, family situation, availability, and social pressures, among others. Even if we assume for the moment that the relational results described here represent some kind of causal link, it is clear that most of the variance in current participation is still unexplained. In other words, we know only a small part of why people participate in arts-related activities.

In the light of these considerations, it is difficult to identify a policy that will have a high probability of furthering the goal of increasing adult participation. It is even difficult to target the appropriate population group. Using the logic that "more is better," should we target those already being socialized in the arts? Or should we select those not receiving any socialization, on the assumption that it is more important to take the first and most basic step towards increased participation? The latter approach assumes that other factors, not even considered in the present study, are not driving socialization results or at least operating as catalysts. Given the nature of the data from the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts, these remain unanswerable questions.

APPENDIX

Readers of this report may wish to obtain more information about the details of the study conducted by Dr. Richard J. Orend and about related research projects conducted for the Research Division of the National Endowment for the Arts. The following reports are available through the Education Research Information Center (ERIC) system:

- Richard J. Orend, "Socialization in the Arts." April 22, 1987. ERIC Identification Number: ED 283 768.
- John Robinson, et al., "Public Participation in the Arts: Final Report on the 1982 Survey." Survey Research Center, University of Maryland, January 1986. ERIC Identification Number: ED 264 168.
- Alan R. Andreason and Russell W. Belk, "Consumer Response to Arts Offerings: A Study of Theater and Symphony in Four Southern Cities." University of Illinois, September 1978. ERIC Identification Number: ED 230 450.
- Richard J. Orend, "Leisure Participation in the South, 1980." Volume I: Results; Volume II: Appendices; Volume III: Summary. Human Resources Research Organization, July 1980. ERIC Identification Numbers: ED 206 521, ED 206 522, and ED 206 523.
- John S. Reed and Peter V. Marsden, "Leisure Time Use in the South: A Secondary Analysis, 1980." University of North Carolina, 1980. ERIC Identification Number: ED 221 435.

These documents are the original research reports as prepared by the investigators. They contain extensive information about methods, and numerous tables and figures. The ERIC collection is available at hundreds of libraries in the U.S.A. and abroad, as

well as "on-line" from computerized information services. Requests for information about the purchase of microfiche or xerox copies of these reports should be sent to: ERIC Document Reproduction Services (EDRS), Consumer Service, P.O. Box 190, Arlington, Virginia 22210.